

AP1000 - ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

BACKGROUND

The relationship between the environment and health is one of interdependence – and maintaining a healthy environment is central to increasing quality and human health. Interior Health's (IH) commitment to environmental sustainability supports its primary goal to increase the health and well-being of residents of the interior of British Columbia.

The healthcare sector recognizes the impact of its operations on the environment based on its:

- consumption of large quantities of energy (buildings and equipment)
- generation of considerable quantities of waste (much derived from single use items)
- reliance on transportation (supplies/patients/care-providers)

As one of the trustees of the BC healthcare system, IH is committed to environmentally sustainable operations by reducing its impact on a number of areas within its operations.

1.0 PURPOSE

To embed sustainability principles and practices within IH's operations that demonstrates IH's commitment to supporting environmental sustainability according to environmental legislation and principles of stewardship.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Sustainability	Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. (World Commission on Environment and Development).
Triple Bottom Line	An approach to business which incorporates a balance of ecological, societal, and economic considerations into transparent decision-making processes.

3.0 POLICY

3.1 Scope

This policy applies to all IH staff, physicians, volunteers, patients/clients and long-term care individuals. This policy applies to all IH operations, including but not limited to:

- all aspects of Acute Care, Home & Community Care, Mental Health & Addiction Services, Public Health, Support Services and Corporate Administration; and

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- strategic partners, contracted services and Public Private Partnerships.

3.2 Environmental Sustainable Strategies

Under the authority of the Chief Executive Officer and the Senior Executive Team, IH continues to take proactive steps to reduce the organization’s ecological footprint by implementing a Triple Bottom Line approach to decision making. IH will take action to reduce harm to its staff and residents by transforming operations to ensure they are sustainable and mindful of the environment. In the process of achieving IH’s goal to improve the health and wellbeing of its population, efforts will focus on the following inter-related areas:

- Consider transportation impacts on patients, staff and the community when designing new programs and services.
- Design all new buildings to the LEED Gold standard, work toward making new buildings net zero ready, and require new building construction to take into consideration climate change projections
- Reduce CO2 emissions by including hybrid, alternate fuel, low-emission and zero-emission vehicles in our fleet where feasible
- Reduce organizational travel (administration) and continuing to encourage staff to use more video/teleconferencing and web-based technologies.
- Make improvements to waste management by identifying waste streams, educating users, and engaging staff to divert waste away from landfill.
- Meet federal, provincial and municipal regulatory requirements (e.g. *Climate Change Accountability Act*).
- Develop strategic and collaborative relationships with community partners/stakeholders, Health Authorities, Ministry of Health, Climate Action Secretariat, and energy suppliers (e.g. BC Hydro, FortisBC).
- Decrease energy consumption and energy carbon intensity through capital investment in infrastructure and promoting behaviour change by educating building occupants in energy and Sustainability awareness.
- Incorporate environmental conservation (energy and water) techniques in operating and investing in our facilities to balance quality, cost and sustainability.
- In partnership with Supply Chain, meet ethical and environmental purchasing standards while encouraging our vendors and suppliers to integrate sustainability into their procedures and practices.
- Communicate environmental performance and progress to external stakeholders, the local community and internal stakeholders.

3.3 Environmental Sustainability Program

The approach to environmental sustainability at IH continues to evolve to leverage the local experience, initiative and capacity across the IH-region to drive action across the health authority. An essential building block of IH’s Environmental Sustainability Program is our staff and our leadership driving changes which lowers our overall environmental footprint whenever possible. It is the program’s responsibility to manage and to promote environmental action and sustainability within the organization.

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The program establishes ongoing goals and objectives to meet both the requirement to be carbon neutral as well as the expectations of clients, employees, stakeholders, senior management and the Board.

4.0 REFERENCES

The following list includes the various regulatory standards and strategic goals that Interior Health is authorized to comply with and work towards:

1. *Climate Change Accountability Act (2018)*:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/climate-change/planning-and-action/legislation>
2. BC Energy Step Code: <https://energystepcode.ca/how-it-works/>
3. Carbon Neutral Government: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/climate-change/public-sector/carbon-neutral>
4. IH Strategic Energy Management Plan:
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/sites/default/files/PDFS/strategic-energy-management-plan.pdf>

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